

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01 SY-05 CU-02 IO-13 SSM-03
AID-05 DHA-02 A-01 OPR-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AGRE-00
IGA-02 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 ACDA-07 SCA-01
ORM-02 OC-06 CCO-00 /128 W
-----241830Z 024132 /46

O P 241517Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2808
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 205
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
CIA WASHDC
COMSIXTHFLT
COMPHIBRON SIX
COM THREE FOUR MAU
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 0276

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JANUARY 22-24

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REF: BEIRUT 261 (DTG 211333Z JAN 77)

1. SUMMARY. THE ASF HAS REPORTEDLY MOVED REINFORCEMENTS INTO
ASHRAFIYAH AND SENT UNITS TOWARDS NABATIYAH IN THE SOUTH.
THE KFUR FRONT HAS ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE CALLING "PLURALITY" THE
KEY TO UNITED LEBANON, WHILE PRIMIN AL-HOSSS HAS ENDORSED
"ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION" BUT SPOKEN OUT AGAINST

POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION. FONMIN BOUTROS HAS REMARKED HE WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE PALESTINIANS, THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND ECONOMIC AID WITH THE US SECRETARY OF STATE. PRESIDENT SARKIS HAS REPORTEDLY GIVEN THE VARIOUS PARTIES UNTIL JAN 29 TO SURRENDER THEIR REMAINING HEAVY WEAPONS, AND THE ISF HAS TAKEN UP STATION ON AUB CAMPUS. AN AMERICAN SHIP HAS ARRIVED IN BEIRUT PORT. END SUMMARY

2. SITUATION TENSE IN ASHRAFIYAH. ASF FORCES HAVE INCREASED THEIR FORCES FROM ABOUT 600 TO ABOUT 3,000 IN EAST BEIRUT AND THE SUBURBS AND MOVED FURTHER INTO ASHRAFIYAH, THE HEART OF THE CITY'S CHRISTIAN SECTOR. BECHIR GEMAYEL HAS CALLED FOR A "GENERAL STRIKE," AND PROTESTING RESIDENTS HAVE CLOSED SCHOOLS AND STORES AND REFUSED TO REPORT TO WORK. (SEE SEPTEL.)

3. ASF MOVES SOUTH. RIGHTIST AL BAYRAQ REPORTED ON JAN 24 THAT ASF FORCES FROM JAZZIN HAD BEGUN TO MOVE SOUTH AND HAD REACHED THE HILLS OVERLOOKING NABATIYAH. PRO-LIBYAN AS SAFIR SAID ON THE SAME DAY THAT SOME ASF UNITS HAD ALREADY ENTERED NABATIYAH, BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION OF THIS REPORT (SEPTEL).

4. KFUR FRONT CALLS FOR "PLURALITY." THH CHRISTIAN KFUR FRONT CONCLUDED A THREE-DAY MEETING ON JAN 23 AND ISSUED A FINAL COMMUNIQUE CALLING "PLURALITY" THE "KEYSTONE OF A UNIFIED LEBANON."

5. THE COMMUNIQUE SPECIFIED THAT "EACH CULTURAL
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GROUP" MUST HAVE THE RIGHT TO "HANDLE ITS OWN AFFAIRS" AS THEY PERTAIN TO "LIBERTY, EDUCATION, FINANCES, SECURITY, JUSTICE, SOCIAL MATTERS, AND FOREIGN, RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL RELATIONS." ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNIQUE, THE PARTICIPANTS ALSO DECIDED TO:

A. REORGANIZE AND ENLARGE THE FRONT, IN PART BY APPEALING TO LEBANESE ABROAD TO FORM "A VAST LEGANESE ASSEMBLY."

B. APPOINT SUB-COMMITTEES TO DRAFT BILLS ON NATURALIZATION, THE PRESS, POLITICAL PARTIES, THE FOREIGN PRESENCE (READ PALESTINIANS), AND THE RIGHT OF FOREIGNERS TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY.

C. "WORK FOR THE REPATRIATION OF PALESTIANIANS RESIDING IN LEBANON TO COUNTRIES BELONGING TO THE ARAB LEAGUE."

6. THE FRONT FURTHER ANNOUNCED THAT THIS MEETING WOULD SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR AN UPCOMING "ENLARGED CONGRESS." NO TIME ANDPLACE WERE GIVEN, HOWEVER.

7. AL-HOSS TV INTERVIEW. DURING A JAN 22 INTERVIEW ON LOCAL TELEVISION, PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS REAFFIRMED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT ENDORSED "ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION," BUT STRONGLY OPPOSED "ANY FORM OF POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION." ON OTHER SUBJECTS, HOSS NOTED:

A. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD IMPOSE "SEVERE PENALTIES FOR CARRYING OR TRANSPORTING INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS."

B. LEBANON WOULD CONTINUE TO RESPECT THE CAIRO ACCORDS, WHICH REMAINED THE "BASIC DOCUMENT" GOVERNING RELATIONS BETWEEN LEBANON AND THE PLO.

C. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS WAS A "SACRED PRINCIPLE," BUT "THE SECURITY OF THE NATION WAS MORE IMPORTANT
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UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES."

D. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ASK (SHIITE) PEOPLE FROM THE BEIRUT SUBURB OF NAABA OR (CHRISTIAN) PEOPLE FROM THE VILLAGE OF DAMOUR TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, UNTIL THE STATE OF SECURITY "ABSOLUTELY" ALLOWED THEM TO DO SO.

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O P 241517Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2809

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 206

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 0276

8. HOSS ALSO REMARKED THAT REORGANIZATION OF THE
LEGANESE ARMY WAS OF "EXTREME URGENCY" BECAUSE OF THE
NEED TO RESTORE SECURITY IN THE SOUTH. HOSS REPEATED,
HOWEVER, THAT THIS PROBLEM WENT "BEYOND LEBANON
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ALONE" AND CONCERNED ALL THE ARAB COUNTRIES.

9. BOUTROS COMMENTS ON SECRETARY VANCE'S MID-EAST
TRIP. IN AN INTERVIEW IN THE JAN 24 EDITION OF
MONDAY MORNING, FUAD BOUTROS ANSWERED QUESTIONS ON
"WHAT HE WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY" TO THE SECRETARY DURING
HIS UPCOMING MIDDLE EAST TRIP. BOUTROS BEGAN BY
STRESSING THAT "WE MUST SHOW (THE US) THE EXTENT
TO WHICH THE PALESTINAIAN ISSUE REFLECTS ON CONDITIONS
IN LEBANON, THE REGION AND THE WORLD AT LARGE." HE
CONTINUED THAT "WE SHOULD ALSO DISCUSS WITH THE US THE
ROLE THE LEBANESE COULD PLAY AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE,"
ALTHOUGH LEBANON HAD NOT MADE A DEFINITIVE DECISION TO
ATTEND.

10. LEBANON WOULD "TAKE UP ECONOMIC QUESTIONS" IN ITS
CONTACTS WITH THE UNITED STATES, ACCORDING TO BOUTROS,
"BECAUSE WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO BOTH FINANCIAL AND
TECHNICAL AID." (IN THIS REGARD, BOUTROS NOTED THAT HIS
TALKS WITH UN SECRETARY GGENERAL ON FEB 7 WOULD "FOCUS
ON ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MATTERS.")

11. BOUTROS DID NOT SAY HE WISHED TO DISCUSS THE SOUTH
WITH THE US, BUT DID REMARK THE SITUATION THERE WAS

"ALARMING." IN TERMS SIMILAR TO HOSS, HE ASSERTED THAT THE SOLUTION WAS AN "ARAB RESPONSIBILITY" WITHIN A FRAMEWORK THAT WE COULD DEVISE."

12. JUNBLATT TO RETIRE AGAIN. LEFTIST LEADER KAMAL JUNBLATT TOLD THE PRESS ON JAN 21 THAT HE WOULD SOON ABANDON HIS POSITIONS AS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY AND HEAD OF THE PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST PARTY IN FAVOR OF READING, WRITING AND RETREAT TO INDIA. THIS WOULD NOT BE JUNBLATT'S FIRST RETIREMENT. DURING THE FIGHTING AND CABINET CRISIS OF MAY 1973, HE WENT TO INDIA TO MEDITATE WITH HIS GURU.
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13. LOCATION OF UNCOLLECTED HEAVY WEAPONS, ACCORDING TO INDEPENDENT AN NAHAR ON JAN 21, THE QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE HAS OBTAINED RELIABLE INFORMATION ON THE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF UNCOLLECTED HEAVY WEAPONS. THE PAPER CONTINUED, HOWEVER, THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS HAD REFRAINED FROM ISSUING ORDERS TO SEIZE THE WEAPONS TO GIVE THE VARIOUS PARTIES TIME TO SURRENDER THEM VOLUNTARILY BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING OF THE QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE ON JAN 29.

14. ISF ON AUB CAMPUS. ON JAN 23 A 40-MAN CONTINGENT OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES TOOK UP STATION ON THE AUB CAMPUS TO PROVIDE ROUTINE POLICE PROTECTION, ACCORDING TO UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS. MINISTER OF INTERIOR SLAMAN INITIATED THE MOVE IN FULL COOPERATION WITH AUB AUTHORITIES.

15. FIRST US SHIP ARRIVES. THE US SHIP SHIRLEY LYKES ARRIVED IN BEIRUT PORT WITH A LOAD OF PL-480 FOOD ON JAN 24.
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Message Attributes

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